

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY

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SUBJECT: VAN CLIBURN PIANO COMPETITION

1. MRS. ALANN SAMPSON, CHAIRWOMAN, EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE VAN CLIBURN PIANO COMPETITION, HAS ADVISED DEPARTMENT THAT SHE PLANS TO TRAVEL TO MOSCOW TO MEET WITH BUTROVA AT MINISTRY OF CULTURE ON MAY 29. APPOINTMENT CONFIRMED BY PHONE BY LITVINOV OF MINCULT. MRS. SAMPSON, WHO RECENTLY ASSUMED CHAIRPERSON DUTIES, VERY MUCH HOPES FOR OPPORTUNITY TO CONSULT WITH CULTURAL AFFAIRS OFFICER ON PROBLEMS DESCRIBED BELOW, ALTHOUGH SHE WILL PROBABLY BE ACCCOMPANIED TO MINCULT BY U.S. IMPRESSARIO SHELLY GOLD, WHO WILL BE IN MOSCOW ON OTHER BUSINESS.

2. SAMPSON VISITED DEPARTMENT MAY 19, ALONG WITH HER PREDECESSOR MRS. MARTHA HEYDER. HER PRINCIPAL CONCERN IS TO REACH EVENTUALLY SOME AGREEMENT WITH SOVIETS ON TERMS AND CONDITIONS FOR SOVIET ENTRANTS IN QUADRIENNIAL COMPETITION

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TITION (NEXT SCHEDULED FOR 1981) AND FOR POST-COMPETITION TOURS OF WINNERS. VAN CLIBURN FOUNDATION (VCF) IS NOW BOOKING TOURS FOR WINNERS OF 1981 COMPETITION--FIRST PROBLEM IS THAT SOVIETS IN PAST HAVE NOT GIVEN CLEAR COMMITMENT TO AN INITIAL POST-COMPETITION TOUR BY ANY

POTENTIAL SOVIET WINNER, AND IN ANY CASE WANT TO PUT SUCH

TOURS ON COMMERCIAL BASIS AS OPPOSED TO NON-PROFIT ARRANGEMENTS VCF CONSIDERS APPROPRIATE.

3. IN CASE OF 1977 SECOND-PLACE WINNER TORADZE, SHELLY GOLD STEPPED IN TO CONCLUDE AN AGREEMENT WITH GOSKONSERT PROVIDING FOR \$700 RECITAL FEE, TRAVEL COSTS AND SOVIET ESCORT/INTERPRETER. SOME ON VCF BOARD APPARENTLY FEEL THIS WAS IMPROPER COURSE, NOT ONLY BECAUSE OF VCF FINANCIAL LOSSES, BUT ALSO AS MATTER OF PRINCIPLE SINCE WINNERS FROM OTHER COUNTRIES ARE BOOKED ON NON-PROFIT BASIS. OTHERS ON VCF BOARD EVIDENTLY BELIEVE CONCESSIONS REASONABLE GIVEN SOVIET SYSTEM AND IMPORTANCE OF SOVIET PARTICIPATION.

4. SECOND ISSUE IS THAT OF SUBSEQUENT TOURS BY WINNERS, AS EXEMPLIFIED BY CASES OF 1973 FIRST-PLACE WINNER VIARDO AND CURRENT EFFORTS FOR FUTURE TORADZE TOURS. MRS. HEYDER IN PARTICULAR APPEARS TO FEEL CONTINUED VCF SUPPORT FOR SUCH TOURS SHOULD BE GIVEN AND SHE IS CONTEMPLATING A PRESSURE CAMPAIGN, E.G. LETTERS FROM INFLUENTIAL AMERICANS, TO PRESS FOR SOVIET PERMISSION ALLOWING ESPECIALLY VIARDO, AND ALSO TORADZE TO TOUR ABROAD.

5. IN DISCUSSION MAY 19, DEPTOFF OPINED THAT SOVIETS WOULD INSIST IN FIRST INSTANCE ON COMMERCIAL TOURS AT HIGH COSTS FOR COMPETITION WINNERS AND IN CASES OF VIARDO LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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AND TORADZE WOULD REJECT PRESSURES AS NOT VCF OR MINCULT AFFAIRS. IN THIS CIRCUMSTANCE, VCF BOARD SHOULD CAREFULLY WEIGH ITS OPTIONS AND BE PREPARED TO TOUGH IT OUT IF IT SERIOUSLY WANTED CLEAR SOVIET COMMITMENTS AND A NON-COMMERCIAL BASIS FOR FIRST POST-COMPETITION TOUR. SOVIETS WERE ALMOST CERTAIN TO SET THEIR CONDITIONS AND IMPLY THAT VCF WILL OTHERWISE RISK ABSENCE OF SOVIET ENTRANTS.

6. ON FORTHCOMING TRIP, SAMPSON WILL PROBABLY ONLY SEEK TO EXPLAIN VCF CONSIDERATIONS AND ELICIT STATEMENTS OF SOVIET POSITIONS FOR REPORT BACK TO VCF BOARD. (EMBASSY MAY HAVE SOME FURTHER BACKGROUND FROM 1974 VISIT TO MOSCOW BY HEYDER, WHO AT TIME MET WITH CAO.)

7. SAMPSON ARRIVES IN MOSCOW LATE ON SATURDAY MAY 27 AND DEPARTS TUESDAY MAY 30. WOULD CULTURAL AFFAIRS OFFICE BE WILLING TO MEET WITH HER MAY 28 OR 29? PLEASE ADVISE.
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